

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region



PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Extends Deadline for Final Listing Decision for the North American Wolverine Under Endangered Species Act

A 6-month extension in the listing process will allow time for further review of science

DENVER—The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today that it will extend the deadline for our final decision on whether to list the wolverine under the Endangered Species Act. The Act allows for such an extension when there is substantial scientific disagreement regarding the sufficiency or accuracy of the available data relevant to the decision at issue.

During the peer review process on our proposed rule to list the wolverine as threatened, we received a variety of opinions from the scientific community concerning the information we used to develop the proposed rules. Specifically, some peer reviewers questioned the information we used to describe wolverine habitat, and estimates of the likely impacts to wolverine habitat from future climate change. As a result, we reopened the comment period from October 31 to December 2, 2013 and received additional comments regarding the science behind our proposal. In response, we will be extending the deadline for the final listing decision by 6 months to further evaluate areas of scientific disagreement and uncertainty as they relate to the wolverine listing decision. Today we published a Federal Register notice extending the deadline for the final listing decision. The new deadline for a final rule or withdrawal of the proposal will be August 4, 2014.

With the Federal Register notice announcing the 6-month extension we are also reopening the comment period for the wolverine listing until May 6, 2014, details on the kinds of information the Service is seeking is available in the 6-month extension notice. You may obtain copies of the notice and proposed rules on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> at Docket No. FWS-R6-ES-2012-107 for the proposed threatened status for North American wolverine. Copies of the proposed rules are also available at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/mammals/wolverine/>.

We will accept written comments and information during this extended comment period and will consider information and recommendations from all interested parties. If you previously submitted comments or information on the proposed rules, please do not resubmit them. We have incorporated them into the public record, and we will fully consider them in the preparation of our final determinations.

In addition, during the period of the 6-month extension, we will be formally engaging with experts in the scientific community to further evaluate areas of scientific disagreement and uncertainty as they relate to the wolverine listing decision. We intend that any final action resulting from these proposals be based on the best scientific and commercial data available and be as accurate and as effective as possible. You may submit comments by one of the following methods:

(1) Electronically:

Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Keyword box, enter the appropriate Docket No.: Docket No. FWS–R6–ES–2012–107 for the proposed threatened status for North American wolverine. Then, in the Search panel on the left side of the screen, under the Document Type heading, check on the Proposed Rules link to locate the proposed rule. You may submit a comment by clicking on “Comment Now!”

(2) By hard copy:

For the proposed threatened status for the North American wolverine, submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R6–ES–2012–107; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

We request that you send comments only by the methods described above. We will post all comments on <http://www.regulations.gov>. This generally means that we will post any personal information you provide us.

Background: On February 4, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) published in the *Federal Register* a proposed rule to list the North American wolverine as threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. With that rule, the Service also proposed a special rule that tailored the prohibitions of the Endangered Species Act that would apply to the wolverine if the listing were finalized. The proposed rules had a 90-day comment period that ended May 6, 2013.

The Endangered Species Act provides an important safety net for America’s native fish, wildlife, and plants. This landmark conservation law has prevented the extinction of hundreds of imperiled species across the nation and promoted the recovery of many others. The Service is working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species. To learn more about the Endangered Species Program, visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/>. Connect with our [Facebook](#) page, follow our [Twitter](#) feed, watch our [YouTube](#) channel and view our [Flickr](#) photo stream.

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